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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6117
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK IMMEDIATE

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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [CG](#)
SUBJECT: MOBUTU-ERA STALWART KENGO WA DONDO ELECTED DRC
SENATE PRESIDENT

REF: KINSHASA 526

1. (U) Leon Kengo wa Dondo, best known for his long service as Mobutu's prime minister, won the presidency of the DRC Senate May 11 over former Kabila chief of staff and human rights minister Leonard She Okitundu by 55-49 votes. The Senate president assumes the office of chief of state on an interim basis if that office becomes vacant.

2. (U) The vote, broadcast by Congolese state television, was by secret ballot. The result indicates pro-Kengo forces were able to win over at least 15 members of the pro-Kabila AMP coalition to their side. Additional details to follow septel.

3. (SBU) Comment: Kengo's upset victory is a setback for the pro-Kabila camp. Rumors already circulating of generous offers for senators' votes are reminiscent of reports from the earlier elections of senators themselves. End comment.
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